

**AMWG HBC ad hoc group**  
**Comments and Response to comments on Project Proposals**  
**May 5, 2003**

Comments from ad hoc group members are in regular type, *responses to those comments from other ad hoc members are in italics*, and **responses to comments from Sam / Randy are in CAPS and bold**.

**Comment from Gary Burton:**

Project 24 is still about population estimates instead of the population/aggregation genetics proposal (Douglas work).

*Response to Gary Burton from Steve Gloss:*

*Gary-thanks for noticing this, Attached is the one that should be included.*

*I sent it last week but apparently the old one got carried over somehow-let me know if you see problems with this one.*

**WE REPLACED THE PROPOSED PROJECT #24 DESCRIPTION WITH THE PROPOSAL ATTACHED TO STEVE GLOSS' EMAIL. COMPLETE.**

**Comments from Rick Johnson:**

Am I correct to understand that each of these projects will undergo an RFP and a competitive bidding process, and the specifics of the projects may change in this process? I think these projects are suffering from the lack of a coherent umbrella strategy. I'm not sure we can come up with a mutually-agreeable suite of projects without it. Specific comments on the projects:

**PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE GCDAMP WILL FOLLOW THE PROCUREMENT PROTOCOLS OF GCMRC. THE REPORT OF THE HUMPBACK CHUB AD HOC GROUP CONTAINS DESCRIPTION OF AN OVERALL STRATEGY (SEE SECTION 4.0) AND HOW THESE PROJECTS WILL ADDRESS THE THREATS TO THE HUMPBACK CHUB IDENTIFIED IN THE RECOVERY GOALS (SEE SECTION 3.0, THE TABLE PREPARED AT THE APRIL 22, 2003 AD HOC MEETING, AND THE TIMELINE).**

Project 5.

This project needs to be expanded to encompass all park resources. Some of the changes would include:

\*Change title to "Comprehensive Action Plan to conserve, protect, and enhance park resources in Grand Canyon."

\*Change study goal to: "Develop a plan to identify, coordinate, and foster the completion of actions to benefit park resources in Grand Canyon"

\*Study objective are to:

- a. Review the full range of threats to native fish in the CRE (e.g., predation, competition, parasitism, and alterations of water temperature, flow regimes & turbidity) and other park resources.
- b. Review the full range of potential management actions to increase recruitment and decrease mortality of native fish (e.g., non-native fish control, parasite control, modifications of flow, temperature and turbidity regimes, etc.) and benefit other park resources.
- c. Identify the pros and cons of all potential management actions (e.g., effectiveness, risk to native species, cost, ease/immediacy of implementation, etc.).
- d. Produce a recommended sequence of research and management actions (implemented either singly or in combination) to increase the abundance of humpback chub and other native fish, and benefit other park resources. Rapidly enhancing humpback chub populations will have a higher precedence in developing the sequence of management actions than enhancing other native fish populations or producing the best experimental designs.
- e. Identify the steps involved to accomplish each recommended research and management action, the roles of the responsible agencies, and potential sources of funding.

**THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN VIEWED BY THE AD HOC GROUP AS THE COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR PROTECTING THE HUMPBAC CHUB. THE GCDAMP STRATEGIC PLAN LIKELY SHOULD BE VIEWED AS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO PROTECT PARK RESOURCES. IF THIS IS THE CASE, THIS PROJECT SHOULD BE DROPPED.**

#### Project 7

\*Add to "Task description and schedule" section "This project will be completed if it is determined that a broodstock is necessary for augmenting the wild population in Grand Canyon (see project 8)"

**THIS PROJECT IS A PREREQUISITE TO USING WILLOW BEACH FISH AS BROODSTOCK FOR RESEARCH OR OTHER PURPOSES. THE AD HOC GROUP HAS NOT AGREED THAT THIS ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL A NEED FOR PROPAGATION HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED.**

#### Project 9

\*Change title to: "Remove humpback chub gametes from ...."

\*Change IV. 2. to: "Collect gametes from the 30-mile aggregation."

\*Change VII. 2. to: "Collect and remove gametes."

\* Add to VI: 3. Before collecting gametes:

- a. Identify the specific purpose of the program, how controlled propagation will resolve the problem, and why controlled propagation is preferred over other management options.
- b. Formulate a comprehensive plan (Flagg and Nash, 1999) and perform a benefit/risk analysis (Waples and Drake, 2002).

- c. Follow USFWS policy regarding controlled propagation, e.g.,:
  - i. Complete a genetics conservation plan.
  - ii. Revise the recovery plan.
  - iii. Complete NEPA compliance.
  - iv. Secure a commitment to funding.
  - v. Implement supporting environmental management actions.
- d. Have the plans reviewed by independent experts familiar with the species and with controlled propagation.

**THE AD HOC GROUP NEEDS TO DETERMINE THE SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT, WHETHER IT IS ABOUT REMOVING FISH OR JUST GAMETES. RICK'S COMMENT STEMS FROM A CONCERN THAT REMOVING 30-MILE FISH WILL EXTIRPATE THAT AGGREGATION, MAKING THEM UNAVAILABLE FOR EXPANSION IF A TCD WERE INSTALLED.**

#### Project 10

Change title to: "Research and management of fish parasites...."

The specifics of a research and management program needs to be written.

**AGREE. BILL PERSONS SHOULD EXPAND THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT TO INCLUDE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF FISH PARASITES.**

#### Project 11

\*I have so much heartburn with this project. The project needs a complete rewrite to clearly state and defend the assumptions, purpose, likely outcomes, and remedial actions. Then it needs a review by independent experts in population genetics.

**AD HOC GROUP NEEDS TO ADDRESS.**

\*Sections III and IV. I believe the premise of this project, that humpback were historically found in many tributaries within Grand Canyon, is incorrect. Valdez (2000. Research and implementation plan for establishing a second population of humpback chub in Grand Canyon) states: "[r]esident populations of humpback chub have not been documented from any stream smaller than the LCR, although, historically, humpback chub have had access to every tributary in Grand Canyon."

**RICH VALDEZ, PLEASE ADDRESS.**

\*VI. The author appears to assume that the population decline of humpback is due to the lack of recruitment. It's not clear to me that we don't have sufficient recruitment to balance mortality given the carrying capacity of the LCR. Will growing out fish to a large size above Chute Falls lead to a larger \*self-sustaining\* population of humpback? I don't think so.

**FWS, PLEASE ADDRESS.**

\*VI. The author dismisses the chance of the chub becoming established and reproducing above Chute Falls. If this is true (and I doubt it), then I see no benefit in the action.

**FWS ADDRESSES REMEDIAL ACTIONS THAT COULD BE TAKEN IF A RESIDENT POPULATION BECAME ESTABLISHED (SEE SECTION VI, PARAGRAPHS 2 AND 3). HOWEVER, MOST OF THE NATIVE FISH BIOLOGISTS INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL VIEW THAT POTENTIAL ESTABLISHMENT AS POSITIVE, EVEN WITH THE POTENTIAL FUTURE NEED FOR YOUNG-OF-YEAR AUGMENTATION TO ENHANCE GENETIC DIVERSITY.**

- \* Add to VI: 3. Before conducting any translocations:
- a. Identify the specific purpose of the program, how controlled propagation will resolve the problem, and why controlled propagation is preferred over other management options.
  - b. Formulate a comprehensive plan (Flagg and Nash, 1999) and perform a benefit/risk analysis (Waples and Drake, 2002).
  - c. Follow USFWS policy regarding controlled propagation, e.g.:
    - i. Complete a genetics conservation plan.
    - ii. Revise the recovery plan.
    - iii. Complete NEPA compliance.
    - iv. Secure a commitment to funding.
    - v. Implement supporting environmental management actions.
  - d. Have the plans reviewed by independent experts familiar with the species and with controlled propagation.

**THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT IS IDENTIFIED IN THE PROPOSAL. IS THIS PROJECT VIEWED AS CONTROLLED PROPAGATION? FWS, PLEASE ADDRESS HOW THIS PROPOSAL WILL FOLLOW YOUR POLICIES.**

Project 13.

\*As I read it, this does not limit the range of experimental flows to benefit chub and other resources. If this is correct, then my only other comment is in regards to the January to March fluctuating flows in 2004. I'm concerned about the impact of these flows to sediment and wonder if there are other possible fluctuations that might also be tried to disadvantage trout in both the egg and alevin stage but not break the sediment bank (add in weekly variability and reduce daily variability?). If 2004 could/should be modified based on the results of 2003, then that should be stated somewhere in the document.

**THIS PROJECT SEEKS TO IDENTIFY HOW DAM OPERATIONS MAY IMPROVE RECRUITMENT AT SPECIFIC LIFE STAGES OF THE HUMPBACK CHUB. THE DEFINITION OF EXPERIMENTS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS IS UNDERWAY, BUT WILL INCORPORATE NEW INFORMATION GAINED FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES, INCLUDING THE WINTER FLUCTUATIONS OF THE 2003 – 2004 EXPERIMENT (SEE SECTION VI, TASK 5). THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PREPARED FOR THE 2003 – 2004 EXPERIMENT ALLOWS FOR MODIFICATION OF 2004 RELEASES BASED ON MONITORING OF 2003 FLOWS.**

Project 16.

\*VI.3 Change "Each AMWG governmental agency...." to "Each AMWG member may assign a PIO or Communications Director to be a member of a team...."

**SINCE THE AMWG OUTREACH GROUP INCLUDES NON-GOVERNMENTAL AMWG REPRESENTATIVES, THIS CHANGE SEEMS APPROPRIATE.**

\*VI.5. Change to "All press releases will obtain concurrence from the AMWG before distribution."

**AMWG MEMBERS WILL LIKELY RESIST THE REQUIREMENT TO OBTAIN AMWG APPROVAL PRIOR TO THEIR MAKING INDIVIDUAL PRESS RELEASES. PERHAPS THE OUTREACH GROUP SHOULD DEVELOP INFORMATION AND EDUCATION APPROACHES FOR THE AMWG TO CONSIDER (WHICH MAY INCLUDE GCDAMP PRESS RELEASES).**

Project 17.

\* I do not believe that this is a high priority project for humpback and should be dropped. This could be made more compelling by focusing the effort on razorback sucker.

**ARE THERE NO HUMPBAC CHUB DOWNSTREAM OF DIAMOND CREEK? (SEE SECTION III, LAST PARAGRAPH) THIS REACH OF THE COLORADO RIVER IS WITHIN THE CRE. BILL DAVIS, PLEASE ADDRESS.**

Project 18.

\*Change title to: "Remove non-native fish from Bright Angel using a weir. Evaluate efficacy of a weir for non-native fish control at Clear Creek, Tapeats Creek, or other high priority [streams].

**PROJECT #18 IS FOCUSED ONLY ON BRIGHT ANGEL CREEK. PROJECT #1 HAS BEEN EXPANDED TO INCLUDE OTHER TRIBUTARIES (SEE "STUDY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, END PRODUCT"), AND THE USE OF ALL METHODS FOR REMOVAL (SEE "STUDY METHODS/APPROACH").**

\* Other changes needed in body of proposal to be consistent with change in title.